

Tagging Along With Wolvie

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Author's Note: This fic was inspired by Wolverine #51 where Jubilee asks Logan if she can come with him on his scoot. I wanted to write a story about what might happen if Logan, one day, agrees to let her come along. In this story, Jubilee is about nineteen.

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Tagging Along With Wolvie

By allykat

Jubilee waited in the half-light of a hallway leading into the foyer of the mansion. She cocked her head. Yep, those distant footsteps definitely sounded like the clip of Logan's cowboy boots on the tile floor.

The sound of the footsteps came closer. Slowed. Jubilee knew he sensed her presence; smelled her was a better description. He had senses like an animal, however, since she did not, she figured she could get away with this little farce. She moved from her position, started across the foyer and jumped at the sight of him.

"Wolvie!" she exclaimed in pseudo surprise. She stopped in his path. His hair was damp from a recent shower. Lately, he'd been ripping through the scenarios in the danger room. Something was eating him, but he wouldn't talk about it to anyone. Typical Logan. Painfully macho. "I thought you were still working out."

"Finished," he replied past the stogie in his mouth. Unruffled by her sudden appearance, he changed his course to move around her. Like a strategically placed chess piece, Jubilee blocked his path.

"Where ya' goin'?" She clasped her hands behind her back and rocked back on her heels.

One eyebrow lifted. They both knew this wasn't a new game. "What's it to you?" He moved the other way and she headed him off.

Jubilee wasn't about to let him get away. "Do you have a date?"

"Only with a dozen pints o' beer and as many whisky chasers."

Date with beer okay, date with female not cool. So far so good. "You going out on your scoot?" That was a stupid question seeing that he wore faded Levis, the usual black tank top and a black motorcycle jacket.

Logan's lazy expression took on a suspicious gleam. "Hadn't planned on walking."

"To Hardcase's?" He wasn't making this easy.

"Auger Inn." He moved the other way and she sidestepped.

"Tough hang out."

"S'okay. I'm in a mood tonight." As if he realized that he wasn't going to get past her without physically picking her up and moving her aside, he stopped and removed the stogie from his mouth. "Stop with the hokey pokey darlin' and tell me what cho' want."

Jubilee stepped up and poked him in the chest with a slim finger. "_I'm_ going with you." When he opened his mouth she knew he was going to say no just like he had every other time. She grasp his jacket lapels in both hands and looked into his face. "Oh please, Wolvie," she said and used her best pitiful Bambi face. The corner of his mouth quirked. Was he smiling? "Pleeaassse," she cajoled. "Friday night TV is boring and everyone's gone out to see a dumb romantic movie--all that kissing and smooching. Blech." She made a face.

"And that's bad?" Logan asked, his eyebrows climbed up a notch and Jubilee was surprised to hear him chuckle. She let go of his jacket and stepped back, measuring his expression. He was smiling. He pushed up the brim of the cowboy hat with the tip of one finger. "And yer thinkin' that comin' with me ta' the bar is going ta' be fun?"

"Isn't that why you go?" she asked, then immediately wondered at the shadow that crossed his expression.

"Sometimes, pum'kin. Sometimes. I don't think the Auger Inn is yer kind o' scene."

As far as she was concerned it wasn't a good scene for anyone. Aloud she said: "I'll just drink soda pop and listen to the jukebox music, maybe dance a little. I promise I won't be any trouble."

Logan laughed at that. "Darlin', yer a world o' trouble. Ya' can't help it. I guess that if I said no you'd follow me anyway?"

Jubilee hadn't thought of that, but it was a good idea. She nodded, crossed her arms and stuck out her chin. "I'm old enough now, I can go on my own."

"Damn, girl, you should get a flamin' Oscar for this performance." Logan shook his head and flung an arm around her shoulders. She snuggled up to him and didn't try to contain her triumphant grin.

Checkmate! she thought.

Logan's Harley was parked out in front of the mansion. He straddled it, and she let him kick start it before she settled on the back, put her feet on the chrome pegs then wrapped her arms around him. Tonight at least she wouldn't have to share him with anyone.

_Tonight, I'm tagging along with Wolvie and we're going to have so much fun! _

* * * *

_Y__eah right. _

An hour later Jubilee sat on a barstool and wondered if she should have stayed at the mansion and zoned in front of the tube. The Auger Inn was a biker bar full of black-leather dudes, a floozies with tattoos. And it stank, too, a putrid mixture of smoke and vomit. _Triple 'ude_, she thought, _rude, crude and lewd_.

Jubilee rested her chin in her hand and blew up at a lock of hair hanging in her eyes. So far, she'd played a few rounds of pool with Logan, losing of course, and now she had a choice of watching hockey on the big screen TV or watching Logan pulverize all comers in arm wrestling matches. These posturing, grunting, sweating males were just ridiculous. The testosterone level in this room had to be off the chart. What was next? Belly bucking contests? Hairy chest contests? Well, that was another contest Logan would win hands down. While it was the current fashion for men to get in touch with their feminine side, Logan simply didn't have one and if he ever had it died of neglect.

"And what was with these women?" she grumbled to herself and glared at two females hovering around Logan. Was the cheering section necessary? Logan soundly defeated another luckless contender and the two women clapped, cheered and bounced up and down. The loser of the match, a young good-looking guy, didn't appear too happy.

"Tough luck, bub," Logan said, leaning back in his chair and resting a muscular arm over the back, the mannerism unconsciously arrogant. "Next!"

Logan ignored the young man's angry glance as the waitress appeared with another round of Boiler Makers. Yuk! Jubilee grimaced. She didn't know how he drank beer with whisky chasers. They were like, totally gross.

"You okay, darlin'?" he called to her.

"Oh yeah, just peachy," she mumbled, "not." She then found herself under intense scrutiny from Logan's cheering section. The two females sauntered over and flanked her, sitting on the stools on either side like they were about to interrogate her. Jubilee felt vaguely claustrophobic.

"Hey kid, why don't you introduce us to your daddy," said the willowy brunette with green eyes. Her blue jean cut-off shorts were barely decent.

Jubilee hunched on the stool, crossed her arms and glowered. "He ain't my daddy."

"Don't want to share your brother then, huh?" the other woman said. "I promise we'll treat him well." She was blonde, stacked and wore a tiny leather miniskirt and a matching halter top. Jubilee looked her up and down. Nope, not Logan's type at all.

"He ain't my brother either, so piss off sister." Jubilee clenched her hands, and resisted the urge to paf them.

"Aren't you a little young for him?" the brunette quipped, her eyes on Logan.

"Aren't you a little old?" Jubilee shot back.

"Now listen here you little...", the blonde began.

"Is there anything I can do for you ladies?" asked Logan from behind.

The women deserted her to fawn over Logan. Didn't matter that he was short and hairy, there was something about Logan that women flocked to. Jubilee sipped her soda and stared morosely at the trio. To Logan's credit, he sent the two women back to their table with a fresh round of drinks on him. Then he and a big biker dude named Butterfly, no doubt named for the tattoo on his right biceps, started a game of pool.

"Forget them," Jubilee grumbled and went to the jukebox. She didn't like the country western music favored by the majority of the bar's patrons. On the jukebox music list, she found some outdated rock and roll. Better then nothing, and if she heard Achy Breaky Heart one more time she was going to hurl. She loaded the jukebox up with quarters and queued up a half dozen songs.

Jubilee began dancing to an old song from The Cars called Best Friend's Girl. Soon she found she had a dance partner: the young, good-looking guy Logan had defeated at arm wrestling. Perhaps he wasn't a good arm wrestler, but he was a skilled dancer, and he was pretty cute. He had a mop of blonde hair, blue eyes and a friendly smile. He took her hand and spun her around. It appeared they started a trend when a few more couples joined in.

After a half dozen songs, her partner left for a beer and Jubilee slipped outside into the parking lot and sat on the bumper of a parked car. She stared at tire tracks pressed into the dirt and she scuffed at them with the toe of her shoe. This evening was a

disaster. In many ways Logan still treated her like a thirteen-year-old, and she had no idea what to do about it, or even if she should do anything. She suddenly realized why those two women thought he was her brother; he acted like a big brother.

"Great," Jubilee muttered. She looked up at the sound of footsteps. It was her dance partner. "Hi. It was hot in there," she said.

"It's gonna get hotter out here, babe," the guy replied. "Your brother should keep a closer eye on you."

"What is it with this brother thing? He's not my flamin'... **Ack!**"

The guy grasped her upper arm and jerked her to her feet. He tried to wrap his arms around her and she pulled out of his embrace.

"Get your slimy mitts off!" she said, backing away.

"What's with you? You sure were friendly inside," he slurred.

"Not interested," she said. "Bug off."

"Oh and what if I don't? Is your brother is going to beat me up?" he scoffed. "I can take on that runt with one hand tied behind my back."

Jubilee laughed. "Oh yeah, right. Like maybe you and an army of other guys. But I don't need him to protect me."

He grabbed her jacket, pulling her to him, trying to press his mouth against her. His breath stunk of whisky.

"That was a big mistake," she said and gestured. Paf!. A shower of sparks and lights flew from her fingers. "You're lucky I didn't charge 'em up."

"Argh!" The guy released her and pawed at his face. He fell to his knees, his hands over his eyes.

"Serves you right, ya' jerk. And I'll have you know that Wolvie ain't my brother! He's my... my... date!" Jubilee and left him writhing in the parking lot dirt and she stalked back into the bar, sat down and ordered another 7-Up. By the inquiring glance that Logan sent her way, she could tell he noticed her absence. She wanted to stick her tongue out at him, but didn't.

The door flew open, slammed against the wall and shivered on its hinges before closing. Logan's gaze jumped from her to the guy, and he slowly laid down the pool cue. The biker dude, Butterfly, grinned and also put his pool cue aside. _Oh oh, this is going to get ugly_, Jubilee thought.

The guy's angry gaze swept the bar and settled on her. Completely unaware that he had the undivided attention of one of the most lethal men on earth, the guy walked up to her, grabbed her hand and yanked her out of the chair.

"No chick, especially no skanky mutie, leaves me in the dirt. Come

on, honey, you and I are going to get to know each other."

"You didn't learn your lesson, did you...?" she began.

The guy wasn't listening. He turned and started to pull her along with him, but then rebounded abruptly backwards like he'd hit a wall. Not a wall, Jubilee saw, it was Logan who stood in his path. To one side, Butterfly stood casually straddle-legged with his arms crossed.

"You're in for in now," she whispered over the guy's shoulder.

"Shutup!" He gave her arm a tug.

"Can I do something for you, bub?" Logan inquired.

"You can start by getting out of my way you stunted shrub."

Logan's right fist jackhammered forward. "***OOF!***" The guy's mouth formed a round "O" and the expression on his face was an unintentional mix of comic surprise and sudden pain. He released Jubilee's hand, and with his eyes bugging, he doubled over and wrapped an arm around his stomach.

Now with his adversary at eye level, Logan stepped forward with a hard right hook on the side of the guy's cheek and jaw. Against adamantium laced knuckles, the guy's jaw cracked and he dropped like a stone to the floor.

"Ee-Youchie! You know that's gotta hurt." Jubilee flinched and peered down at the moaning guy for a moment. Butterfly just chuckled.

Chairs scrapped against the floor as the guy's four buddies stood and stalked toward Logan with dangerous glints in their hard expressions. One guy pushed the long sleeves of his flannel shirt up muscular forearms. Another cracked his knuckles, a third smiled unpleasantly. Jubilee noticed that one of his front teeth was missing. Logan spun towards them, crouched slightly, his hands clenched.

Jubilee retreated a safe distance, and the Team Logan cheerleaders came up behind.

"Hey, your brother is pretty good," the brunette said, her gaze frankly admiring.

"He ain't myâ€| nevermind." Jubilee rolled her eyes. "Watch and learn. You ain't seen nothing yet. Wolvie's not even warmed up," Jubilee replied. "He's about to super-size an order of whup-ass on these guys."

"Don't you think he's out numbered? Butterfly there can help him, but they're going to get stomped," the blonde said. "Shouldn't we do something, like call the cops?"

"Are you joking? That'd ruin the Wolvester's fun! If anything, call an ambulance, those guys are going to need it," Jubilee said.

"I think we're out of here," said the brunette. "I don't want to be

here when the cops show up. I have too many unpaid parking tickets."

"Suit yourself." Jubilee shrugged. "But you're going to miss the show."

The two women slunk away and Jubilee ducked behind the bar, then peered cautiously up.

"This is my baby brother," one big lumberjack-like guy stated, pointing at the coughing, sputtering guy still curled on the floor. He clenched his hands and thick cords of muscle knotted up his forearms. "An' I want you to apologize to him, and then I'm going to take your face off."

"My beef ain't with you, bub," Logan replied.

"It is now..." he big guy never got another word out. He couldn't with Logan's adamantium fist stuck in his mouth. Blood flew. It streamed from the guy's cut mouth and he reeled back, spitting out broken teeth.

Butterfly stepped in, taking out a guy to Logan's left. More bikers hanging out near the dartboard saw two of their biker brethren in trouble and joined the fray. Jubilee ducked a beer bottle sailing over her head. It smashed wetly on the wall behind her and showered her with stinky beer.

"Hey, that wasn't nice!" She extended her hand and puffed the offender who shouted and batted at the sparks bouncing around his face like angry fireflies.

Jubilee spotted Logan in the middle of the fray. A feral half-smirk twisted his lips as he stood his ground amidst flailing fists and falling bodies. A few of the other guys got punches through, but not many and they didn't slow Logan down. Inflicting pain on Logan was akin to kicking a big grizzly bear in the butt: it only pissed him off.

Nearby, Jubilee overheard a blonde biker dude talking to his old lady. "Let's get out of here. That little dude is big trouble. I punched him between the eyes, even had my brass knuckles on and he sputtered a moment then got up...."

Their voices faded away. Jubilee looked back to the fight. Some big jerk holding a chair was sneaking up behind Logan. "No you don't!" Jubilee shouted and puffed him in the butt. He yelped, snatched at his butt and dropped the chair on his foot. "Serves you right!" she said, then saw something come at her from the corner of her eye. The last thing she remembered was exploding pain on the side of her head before the bar wavered out of focus then everything went black.

* * * *

Logan kept his claws sheathed, enjoying the fight for the pure fun of it. There were few things in life he enjoyed more than a good bar brawl. Well there was, he amended, but that other activity was best done with a female in private. He ducked a clumsy right hook and drove forward with a left to the stomach and an upper cut to the chin.

The guy fell back into a buddy. Both of them went down. Out of the corner of his eyes, he saw someone coming up on his left. He fell to a crouch. The punch meant for his face swung harmlessly overhead. A feint, a hard upward jab in the face and the guy was down.

Then Logan saw a beer bottle strike Jubilee on the side of the head.

Time to retreat, he figured. He waded through the fight towards where she had gone down behind the bar. Someone blocked his way. He wrapped a forearm around the unlucky guy's neck and jabbed a hard right fist into his face. The guy sagged and Logan tossed him aside. As much as he wanted to stay for the fun, Jubilee's well being came first. He vaulted over the bar.

"We need to exit this pop stand, darlin', 'fore anything else happens ta' ya'." Logan said to her limp form. He knelt next to her, rolled her over and moved aside her hair to inspect the lump on the side of her head. Nothing bad, still, there was going to be a bruise along with a few folks back at the mansion who weren't going to be happy with him. _When were they ever_, he reminded himself.

"Just livin' up ta' their expectations."

Logan picked her up--she hardly weighed anything--and slung her over one shoulder. With one arm--it evened up the odds--Logan fought and elbowed through the fighting mass, and kicked a few asses on the way out just for good measure. His bud, Butterfly, was doing fine along side his gang buddies.

Once in the quiet parking lot, the fight inside a muffled clamor, Logan felt Jubilee stir.

"Mmmfph," she mumbled then groaned. "Wolvie? Wolvie! Why am I hanging upside down? Wait! We're leaving?" She wiggled and he swatted her butt.

"Settle down, darlin', ya' got a bad head bang there."

"Wolvie!" she shouted again indignantly. "You...you put me down!" She pummeled his back with her fists. "Put me down right now you muscle bound creep, or... or I'll paf you!"

"Whatever you say." He complied, dumping her into the dirt of the parking lot where she sprawled on her butt, her goggles hanging around her neck. She glared at him from between disarrayed locks of black hair.

"Big oaf!" she shouted. Logan figured that if she were a little cat she'd be spitting. She got up, stood chest to chest with him and poked a finger at him. "You get back in there and finish what you started."

It took all of Logan's considerable willpower not to smile. "The situation was gettin' a bit rough, kiddo."

"Rough?" She glared at him. "When did that ever stop you? I've been bored out of my mind all evening, and just when it's getting interesting, we leave!"

Logan stared at her for a startled moment then burst out laughing. "You're scarin' me darlin 'cause you're starting to sound like me. What would I tell the rest o' the gang if they had to bail us both outa jail for brawlin'? I'd never hear the end o' it from 'Ro." He extended a hand and helped her to her feet.

They both turned as the door opened and two guys walked out. One had a swollen eye, the other a broken bloody nose.

"You ain't leavin' ya' hairy freak," one of them said and pulled a butterfly knife, clicking the blade expertly into place.

Logan walked towards them, hands clenched at his side. A friendly fistfight was one thing, pulling a knife was another. "Yer out numbered bub, leave while ya' still can."

"Outnumbered?" the other one snickered and spat at the ground. "Outnumbered by what? You and your little sister?"

Logan brought his fists up.

****SNIKT! ****

The backlot light gleamed down the length of six 9" adamantium claws.

"Like I said bub, outnumbered. But if ya' wanna piece o' me, I'd be happy ta' let you try and take it."

The guy holding the knife stared, mesmerized for one bug-eyed moment while his mouth worked silently.

"Damn Bubba, you're on your own, man. I... I put my money on the short hairy guy," his companion finally managed and turned to run back into the bar. In a rush, he smacked into the door, staggered back, shook his head like a dog, then opened the door and disappeared.

"Uh, yeah," stuttered the guy named Bubba. "Uh, big mistake. No bad feelings, eh?" Without waiting for confirmation, he ran into the bar after his friend.

"They're smarter then they look," Logan muttered and retracted his claws. He found Jubilee sitting on the Harley and staring up into the sky, her expression unreadable. "What's yer flamin' problem?"

"I don't get this sister thing," she said.

"Sister? Darlin' I think that head bang may be affectin' yer thinkin'." Logan straddled the Harley and shook his head and Jubilee settled behind him. He had no flamin' clue what she was talking about, but then most of the time he didn't. Figuring out women was no easy task. He didn't even know if it was possible. At least not in his lifetime. He stared up the Harley and let the engine warm up a moment.

"Well, at least the night isn't a total bummer."

"Don't know what ya' were expectin' darlin'," Logan said, "but if

this is like any other night, it ain't over yet." He felt Jubilee shift behind him.

"What is that suppose to mean?"

"Wish I could say, but we'll find out soon enough." He sniffed the air and stifled a growl.

* * * *

Once on the road, Jubilee wrapped her arms around Logan and laid her cheek against his warm back--there were advantages to having a hairy male friend. She was tired and her head throbbed from its encounter with the beer bottle. In the distance, light flashed in the sky followed by a low rumble. Summer storms were common here. She heard Logan open up on the throttle, and the Harley responded. Maybe he too wanted to get back to the mansion before the storm. Whatever the reason, he was in a hurry. The roar of the Harley's engine through the drag pipes lulled her into a light doze

Suddenly, an intense bright white flash penetrated the lids of her closed eyes. She jerked upright and only Logan's quick reach around kept her from falling off the Harley. Then, a deafening boom of thunder exploded around them, almost on top of them. Jubilee thought it would rattle her teeth from her head. Logan brought the Harley to a halt, and braced one foot on the road. A growl rumbled from his chest.

"What is it?" Jubilee squeaked, blinked and peered over his shoulder. At first, all she saw was the outline of a small child-like figure standing in the middle of the road. Then that figure began to spin something attached to a rope over his head. A whirling vortex of sparkling lights lit the forest around them.

"Oh no, Wolvie. Tell me that isn't who I think it is."

"Gateway," Logan confirmed. "Not now, you pint-sized pinhead," he shouted, "I ain't in the mood."

Gateway remained as silent and impassive as always. The only time he showed up was when he had something to show them, but tonight Jubilee wasn't always interested. She wanted two things: warm clothes, warm bed. A chill traveled up her spine and tightened along her scalp.

"You know, I never could figure this guy."

"You and me both, darlin'," Logan replied. "Don't matter, though, I think we're going on a ride whether we like it or not."

A hurricane of lights streaked towards them, surrounded them, sucking them into its center and howling over their heads.

"I hope the landing doesn't hurt!" Jubilee shouted, shut her eyes and held on. Her stomach lurched. The hurricane picked them up and twisted them around. "Now I know how Dorothy felt!" she shouted, but the wind swept away her words. She could only hear wind in her ears and her hair stood on end and crackled with static. Sparks danced up her arms and covered her and Logan's in a blanket of light.

And just as quickly it was over.

Jubilee opened her eyes... and they seemed not to have moved at all. She peeked over Logan's shoulder. Something was very strange, though, and it took her a moment to realize that she heard...nothing. Absolute silence. No swish of distant traffic, no chirping crickets, and no wind in the treetops. In the distant sky she could see gray boiling clouds back lit by flashes of lightning, but no thunder. Above them, tiny pinpoints of light rained from the heavens and disappeared over the tops of distant trees. If those lights were aircraft, there was no sound of engines.

"Uh, what just happened?"

"Have no clue, Jubes. No flamin' clue," Logan grunted. "But wherever we are, it can't be good if Gateway sent us." He motored the Harley off to the side of the road and pushed the kickstand down with the heel of his boot. He climbed off and Jubilee got her first look at him. Static electricity had his hair standing on end.

"Wolvie!" She laughed and pointed. "You... you... you look like an electrified terrier! Ha ha!" She wiped the tears off her cheeks with the back of her sleeve. "Where's a camera when you need it!"

"Smart ass," Logan grumbled and smoothed down his black hair. "Put a lid on it, Jubes. There ain't something right here."

Jubilee's laughter died. She suddenly felt uneasy and she stared into the dark forest. Shivering, she wrapped her arms round herself. "It looks like the woods around the mansion, but why is it giving me a galloping case of the creeps?"

"It ain't the same." Logan sniffed the air and growled. "There's someone familiar here, though. There's a scent I recognize, but something else is here, too, and it ain't' the welcome wagon lady."

"Uh, how sure of that are you?" she asked, knotting her fingers together. "Kinda sure? Pretty sure? Or is this a hundred percent kinda thing?"

****Snikt!****

Logan popped his claws and fading moonlight glimmered down their silvery adamantium length.

"Um, I'm guessing it's a one hundred percent sure kinda thing?" She knew she was babbling but couldn't help it. "Wolvie, when I bugged you to let me tag along, I didn't think a trip to Nowheresville would be part of the bargain."

"If I had told ya', darlin', ya' wouldn't have believed me." Logan stepped forward, then fell into a combat crouch. His animal-like senses had picked up something she couldn't see or hear. Then Jubilee heard a faint sound, an odd scraping, chittering noise somewhere on the road ahead of them.

"Wolvie?" she whispered.

"I'm going to need some light on the situation, Jubes," Logan said,

his voice guttural and a snarl lifted his lips.

"Uh... okay. You got it," she replied. **PAF!** Fireworks sprang from her fingers and lit up the sky. "Aaaaa!" Jubilee screeched and retreated. "Gross! Bugs! Why bugs? I hate bugs! Oogie, creepy, crawling, disgusting, bugs!" Logan was ignoring her. "Say something, Wolvie!"

"Where's a can o' raid when you need it," Logan growled.

"That's not what I meant!" Jubilee had never seen anything quite like these creatures. They were at least twice her height and a strange cross between beetles and wasps. "Where in the world did these things come from.... Ahhhh!"

A bright energy beamed streaked out from one of the creatures toward Logan. He leapt to the left, tucked and rolled and came up snarling. "Doesn't matter 'cause right now they're in the World o' Hurt! Watch those beams, kiddo!" he shouted and dodged another. With a raro he leaped into the midst of the advancing creatures, a gleeful half-smile on his face. Adamantium claws tore through the bugs, gutting them, ripping through exoskeletons.

Expecting to be spatter with something gross like bug guts, Jubilee cringed and held up her arms. Instead, the sound of Logan's adamantium claws screeching through metal set her teeth on edge. They were cyborg bugs? Jubilee ducked as a sharp metal fragment flew over her head.

"Hey, watch were you're flinging that stuff!" she shouted. "You could hurt somebody, like me!"

"Keep the fireworks comin', pun'kin," Logan called. He disemboweled a bug with a fast back slash. Components sparked and the bug fell to its back, its tiny legs clicking madly in the air.

"More light on its way!" Her pafs, quick and strong, leapt from her fingers. The bugs chittered and moved away from the light. "Don't like that huh? Eat fireworks!"

Jubilee watched Logan use one of the downed bugs as a launch point to jump on top of another. He punched his claws into the top of its head. The thing screeched and little bug arms fluttered wildly. They might be cyborg, but it appeared that they didn't like Logan ripping them up. Another bug snatched Logan from the top of its shrieking buddy. Logan strained back and stuck a trio of claws into one of its eyes.

Logan was shredding them as fast as he could, Jubilee knew, but there were too many for him to deal with alone. They didn't like her fireworks, but she couldn't seem to penetrate their exoskeletons.

Then, a ruler-straight energy beamed smacked into Logan mid-section. The beam picked him up, doubled him over and drove him backwards.

"Ugh!" Logan grunted. He slammed into a tree, slid to the ground and lay still. Excited, the bug things chirped and moved in, surrounding him.

"Wolvie!" Jubilee ran towards him, sending fireworks into beady little bug eyes. "Man o man, why do I always have to save your hairy butt."

The bugs moved back, and in the midst of sparking wires, and dangling parts, Logan rose up, a bug's head speared on the claw points of one hand.

"Something's going on, kiddo'" Logan called, "that beam wasn't meant to kill."

"Couldn't fool me," she returned, and puffed a bug that came too close. But they weren't interested in her; they were interested in Logan. "So what exactly was it?"

"Stun beam, but they didn't figure in my healin' factor," he called to her again.

Having been given a good taste of Logan's fighting prowess, the bugs regrouped and chattered, clicking their metallic arms. Jubilee noticed a few of them watched her, but their focus seemed to be on Logan, who crouched before them, arms out, claw extended, growls rumbling from his chest. Perhaps having formulated a new plan, the bugs came at him again, this time trying to catch him in a three way cross beam. Logan rolled under the beams and came up behind the leaders and opened them up with furious upper cuts from both sets of claws. There were just too many of them and for everyone that he incapacitated, three more took its place.

"See what you can do to distract more of them!" Logan shouted.

Jubilee lit up the sky again with another paf, then toward the opposite end of the skirmish, she saw someone at the edge of the forest. At first she thought it was Gateway, but quickly revised that first impression. The lone figure was too big, and they held a large gun-like weapon.

****BOOM! FFFFSSSS-zzzzt!**** A blue tinged beam shot from the weapon's muzzle and burned through several of the cyborg bugs. Again the weapon's energy beam sent a burning destructive line through the bugs and took down at least a half dozen of them.

"Looks like the cavalry just arrived!" Logan shouted.

Bolstered by this mysterious aide-de-camp, Logan's ferocity increased, until in the end, he stood panting and snarling in the middle of what looked like a huge heap of scrap. The bugs retreated, and Jubilee watch the tiny lights streak silently back into the air. They had won.

Logan's clothes were torn, he was bloody from numerous, but healing, cuts and a coil of metal hung off one spur. He tilted back his head. "Awwwoooooo!".

"That's my guy," Jubilee said and despite her exhaustion, she giggled.

Then, out of the sparking, smoking carnage loomed a tall, lone

figure. Logan turned, sniffed the air, then a faint grin tugged at his lips and he retracted his claws.

"Only one man I know that can howl like that," commented a deep voice. Jubilee recognized the man with the silver hair and a funny eye. Nathan Summers, AKA Cable. He and Logan had been part friends, part adversaries for a long time.

"Evenin', Nathan." Logan dug a cigar out of his pocket and scowled at the smashed tip. "Damn bugs," he muttered. "Hey darlin', how about a light?" Jubilee complied with a tiny paf, and Logan puffed on the cigar a moment then motioned to Nathan. "Fancy meetin' you here."

"Could say the same," the big man replied. He had the beam weapon hefted over one massive shoulder. "Hard for a man to get a quiet drink without some disaster interrupting."

"Know what you mean." Logan gestured with the cigar. "Have any idea where the tin roaches hail from?"

"Hopin' you'd know," Nathan replied and switched the beam weapon to the other shoulder. "Don't even know how I got here."

"Courtesy o' Gateway."

"Heeellooooo? Woo-hoo!" Jubilee said, stepping between the two men and waving one hand. "Oh Dorothy, Toto, I don't think we're in Kansas any more and wouldn't ya' know that I went and left my ruby slippers at home."

"And there ain't a flamin' thing we can do about anything until Gateway's ready ta' send us back," Logan replied, unruffled. He nodded to Nathan. "In the meantime, let's check the bugs and ta' see if we can find out who sent 'em."

The two men left to sift through the rubble of the cyborg bugs.

Jubilee sat on Logan's Harley and sulked. "You know, you guys can be worried if you want and I promise I won't tell anyone!" she shouted. They ignored her. "Macho poopheads. I just wanted to hang out for awhile and what do I get? A loser trying to pick me up at a biker dive and a hoard of escapees from the roach motel."

"No lethal weapons that I can find," Nathan called. "Just the stun beams they hit you with. This technology is alien." Nathan pushed some rubble off an oblong pod with a glass-like top. "Look at this."

Jubilee watched the two men poke around for a moment trying to find a way to open the pod, but Logan opened it his own Logan-like fashion. He leapt on top of the pod, popped his claws, rammed them into the top and opened it like a sardine can, peeling back thin curly-cues of metal.

"A one man capsule," Nathan said. "Exactly your size, Logan. I bet if you lay in there, it'd fit you perfect. Know something you ain't telling me?"

"If I knew what the flamin' hell was happening, Nathan, maybe I'd let you know." Logan looked about as worried as a man like him could.

Which wasn't much, Jubilee thought. If he looked too worried he might tarnish his macho reputation. She rolled her eyes. "Wait. Take that back, girl," she said to herself, and her eyes narrowed. "Something is eating at him, and I bet it's the reasons he's been big time crunching the scenarios in the danger room. He didn't seem too surprised by all this, maybe he knew of it beforehand." She watched Logan speared a part with his claws and tossed it over his shoulder. "Whenever you guys are like done, you know? I don't want to be here if more of these things show up," she called.

Logan strode forward, then stopped, looked up at the sky and sniffed. "I believe we should be lookin' for shelter."

"Why..." Jubilee began. A blinding flash of lightning lit the woods, and the downpour that had been threatening became a reality. Jubilee jerked her coat over her head. "Who turned on the shower!"

"If the topography is the same in this neck o' the woods, there's a cave near here," Logan shouted.

Jubilee followed close behind Nathan; he made an excellent rain block. Logan fetched his Harley and wheeled it off the road under the trees. Jubilee had explored the area around the mansion and knew of hidden palisades and rock formations, so it was no surprise when Logan led them through a thicket of bushes and into a large cave. Nathan was able to stand upright inside and he nodded, approving of their crude accommodations.

"How about some light, darlin'" Logan asked.

****Paf!**** The cave wasn't much but at least it was dry, Jubilee noted. Thunder rumbled outside and any doubts she had about the cave faded. She'd rather be in here with these two tough guys than out there. Nathan gathered old wood scattered about the cave, while Logan stood watch near the cave's entrance. Jubilee sagged against the cave wall as the adrenaline rush faded. She felt ready to drop.

"Whoa there, kiddo," Logan said, and caught her with an arm around her waist before she collapsed. "We'll worry 'bout findin' our way out tomorrow. You look tuckered."

"I'll take first watch," Nathan said. For once Logan did not argue, to Jubilee's relief.

Logan sat down and leaned backed against the cave wall. Jubilee scooted up under his arm and snuggled into him. He held her tight and she laid her head on his chest. He was very warm, his body radiated heat, and she could hear the even, strong rhythm of his heart and it lulled her off to sleep.

* * * *

Nathan crouched by the cave's entrance and regarded the X-man and the young woman who slept, nestled at his side. Despite Logan's tougher-than-nails demeanor, he was a softie when it came to children. But Jubilee was no child, Nathan reminded himself. Logan

seemed to be the only one who hadn't noticed that the thirteen year old had grown into a young woman. Nathan chuckled. He actually felt sorry for Logan. There was some trouble brewing for him, and it was the kind of trouble that his legendary fighting skills would be useless against.

Logan opened one eye and growled. "What's so flamin' amusin'?"

"If I told you, you wouldn't believe me. But you, my friend, will find out soon enough," Nathan replied, chuckled again, then turned away. Yep, it was going to be amusing when Logan finally figured it out.

* * * *

Jubilee knew she was wedged against something very warm and cozy. She sighed and burrowed deeper.

"Time to get up, darlin'," said a familiar voice near her ear. "I can't feel my arm."

"Warm. Comfy," Jubilee mumbled and took a deep breath. Her nose twitched. She smelled the faint odor of cigars, and the unmistakable sent of a man. A man? She took another breath. "Wolvie?"

"Rise n' shine."

Jubilee opened her eyes, sat up, smacked her lips and rubbed her eyes. "I was comfortable. I didn't know that you made such a good pillow." Logan rotated his arm. "A pillow? Had people call me plenty o' things, an' pillow has never been among those."

"I bet," Jubilee teased. "Oh, Wolvie, you have stuff in your hair." She scooted behind him and began to finger comb his hair starting at his temples and up to the ends. It was interesting the way his hair grew up from his temples into two points. And it was softer then she thought it would be. A sound close to a growl rumbled through him. It took her a moment to realize it was more like a purr. He liked this. Jubilee increased her efforts unaware of Nathan's amused interest.

A hand hard hand gripped her wrist. "That's enough, darlin'."

"You look like you've spent the night in a haystack. I'm not done, yet." Jubilee wondered why Nathan chuckled.

"Yes you are." His voice had a strangled quality to it.

"What a grouch." Jubilee sighed and stood. Great. Logan was already in one of his moods.

"I think it's time we look for a way out o' here." Then Logan glared at Nathan. "And whatever yer thinkin', keep it to yerself."

Nathan raised his hands, shook his head and smiled. "I ain't sayin' a thing."

Jubilee had no idea what the guys were talking about. Men. She'd never figure them out in her lifetime. She did know one thing though. Right now she wanted to get home, change out of these clothes and

take a shower. She rubbed her aching left butt cheek. She wasn't used to sleeping on the ground.

She trailed the two men out of the cave. The sky was clear and blue, and rain dripped from the trees. The birds were back. Jubilee could hear them in the branches, and in the distance she could hear the sound of traffic. Wolvie took point, using his senses to alert them of any impending trouble. Nathan had his beam weapon held ready. But at the edge of the road, everything seemed normal. Cars swished by on the road still wet from last night's rain. Logan's scooter was parked where he'd left it under a tree. The only remaining sign of the beetle things were a few singed tree trunks and some broken branches.

"Geez, maybe it was just some bad danger room scenario flashback," she said to no one in particular.

"I'm going to take Jubilee home," Logan was telling Nathan and the big man nodded.

"I'll keep looking around. If I find anything, I'll contact you."

Logan pushed the Harley out of the woods and back onto the road. Jubilee climbed on back and grimaced at the sensation of the wet seat sinking into her shorts. It was a short ride back to the mansion and by the watch on her arm it was close to noon when they drove up. She felt like a teenager who was way overdue home from a date.

Jubilee trailed Logan into the foyer and it was only then that she realized how rumpled and dirty they both looked. Their clothing was torn from their tussle with the bug things. Any thoughts of sneaking to her room were dashed when Jean and Ororo appeared from opposite directions into the foyer. Their faces held duplicate expressions of displeasure, both pressed hands to their hips like disapproving mothers. Remy happened to wander downstairs at that moment, looked at them, tapped his chin and tried his best not to smile.

"Mornin' Jean, 'Ro, Remy," Logan greeted.

"Mornin'! Is that all you can say? We were worried about you two," Jean finally burst out.

"And we heard there was a fight at the Auger Inn," Ororo added, "and you and Jubilee were cited as the instigators. And this came about an hour ago." She held up a piece of paper. "It's your share of the bill for damages."

Logan stepped forward to stand in front of Ororo. He first looked at her, then at the paper.

****SNIKT!****

A single spur slid out and precisely speared the paper from Ororo's hand.

"Thanks," Logan said.

At least one person in the room found this amusing. Jubilee saw Remy staring at the floor and trying to hid his laughter, his shoulders

shaking, one hand clamped over his mouth. Ororo glared at the cajun.

"Logan, I can't believe you would take Jubilee to that place! What were you thinking?" Jean said, stared pointedly at the bill speared on the tip of one spur and then at Logan. He withdrew the spur and caught the bill in one big hand.

"Wait just a moment here!" Jubilee spoke up. They were talking like she was still thirteen. "I'm old enough to take care of myself. I don't need you two acting as my surrogate mothers." Jubilee stood in front of Logan and ignored his surprised expression. "I pestered Wolvie into taking me. And I'm the one who started it. This dweebie guy bothered me, and Wolvie punched him." She swiped at the air with one small fist. "And then that guy's brother--man, he was a big sucker--attacked Wolvie and Wolvie punched him. Wham!" She smacked her fist into an open palm "KO'ed! Down for the count. And then everyone got involved. Then a beer bottled whacked me upside the head, so Wolvie carried me out of there and we were coming home when we saw Gateway. He took us to a place where we were attacked by these huge, giant reepy bugs. Nathan showed up with a big bug zapper of a gun. Then it started raining so we spent the night in a cave... and ...and...." Jubilee trailed off at the incredulous wide expressions on Ororo and Jean's faces. "Hey!" She turned and looked at Wolvie for confirmation of her story and found a lopsided grin on his face. It was the first time she'd seen him smile all morning.

"Darlin', if there's one thing I've learned is ta' never explain ta'the others 'bout what can happen when I ride off for the evenin' on my scoot."

"You mean last night...?"

"You're lucky it was one o' the tamer nights, darlin'. One o' the tamer nights." He squeezed her shoulder, winked at Ororo and Jean, and strode away whistling a tune between his teeth.

"Wolvie!" Jubilee shouted at his retreating back. She shook a fist at him. "You get back here." She stamped a foot. "Creep!"

"What possessed you to go with Logan?" Jean started.

"OOOOooooo!" Jubilee stamped her foot again and shook a finger at the two older women. "Don't start on me about this now. I'm not in the mood!" She swung around and stalked away in the other direction.

"What was that all about?" Ororo finally said after a stunned silence. "Cherie, like Logan said, it's better not to ask, no?" Remy said. He left the two of them alone in the foyer, his laughter echoing down the hallway. Ororo and Jean exchanged puzzled glances.

"Giant bugs?" they both said simultaneously.

**The End **

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**Remember Nathan said some trouble was brewing for Logan. He was

right. The story picks up some years later in "The Twist Inside"
posted here on fanfiction.net**

End
file.